

SEPTEMBER 19, 2006

TALON



Remembering Sept. 11

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**New recycling contract for MNB (North)
In our sights**

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TALON

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Country's roads provide hazards

by Brig. Gen.
James R. "Ron" Mason
*Commander,
Task Force Eagle*

I am saddened as I reflect on the death of one of our young specialists killed in an auto accident during a routine patrol. This serves as a reminder that we are in a hazardous duty environment, and one of the most dangerous enemies we face in Bosnia and Herzegovina are its roads.

On the day of the accident, there was good visibility and a dry paved road. The specialist, an up-armored humvee driver, and his patrol headed south from Camp McGovern toward Bijeljina. A truck with an attached trailer was traveling North toward Brcko. As the truck rounded a curve, the truck's trailer crossed the centerline and crashed into the driver's side of humvee causing extensive damage to both vehicles and the specialist's fatal injuries.

Driving in Bosnia is particularly dangerous. The roads are



Mason

narrow but our vehicles are not. It is not uncommon to see hazardous passing techniques on these winding and hilly roads.

Defensive driving, situational awareness, and moderate speeds must be our standard. The humvee is a vehicle not specifically designed for the highway. It travels slower and is wider than most civilian traffic.

My concern is not limited to humvees. We have experienced other accidents involving non-tactical vehicles. Drivers must be familiar with these defensive driving techniques:

☛☛☛☛☛☛ a safe

following distance. Use the 3-to-5 second method.

Watch your speed. At increased speeds you have less time to react.

■ Always allow yourself a "way out" – someplace to go to avoid an accident.

■ Be prepared to react to the actions of other drivers.

I want to also remind you of existing requirements. All occupants in military vehicles must wear appropriate headgear and seatbelts.

In all tactical vehicles the Kevlar must be worn. Refrain from the use of unauthorized devices, such as earphones for music or cell phones while driving.

Make sure the vehicle is operational. The gauges should work, the windshields and mirrors should be cleaned, and a daily PMCS, before, during and after operation of the vehicle is mandatory.

Vehicle safety standards are also found in Task Force Eagle Policy Letter CSM 13-4. Remember, all occupants are responsible for vehicle safety.

Co-NCO of the Rotation named

Sgt. Darren Thompson of Task Force North was named Co-NCO of the Rotation with Staff Sgt. Steven Johns of Task Force Medical Eagle. The results were named after an Aug. 30 board.

"Patriotism is your conviction that this country is superior to all others because you were born in it."

– George Bernard Shaw (1856-1950)



About the cover: Front: Deborah Johnson, a Department of Defense civilian, Sgt. 1st Class LeRoy Masters and 147th Finance Battalion Command Sgt. Maj. Jerry Mahlke pray during a Sept. 11 Memorial Service at the Eagle Base Chapel. by Sgt. 1st Class Clinton Wood.

Plastic recycling program gears up

Story and photo by
Sgt. 1st Class Clinton Wood
135th MPAD

U.S. Bases in Bosnia and Herzegovina will become a better neighbor starting this week.

Plastic-recycling bins will be placed around the bases by Kellogg, Brown & Root employees to collect plastic. The plastics such as plastic water bottles will be recycled at Sud Moll in Tuzla.

From this plant, the plastic will be milled and shredded into chips for transport to a finishing plant in Austria.

This is the second attempt in recycling plastic from the bases. The program was attempted in 1999 by the same firm on a no-fee basis, but the cost to treat and transport the plastic bales outweighed the profits, said Sud Moll Director Harald Arndt during a press briefing Sept. 12 at the Task Force Eagle PAO office on Eagle Base.

U.S. Army Contracting Command Europe/Joint Contracting Center-Tuzla will also assist in this year's project. Staff Sgt. David Herrig, a contingency contracting officer from the 42nd Contracting

Squadron, Maxwell AFB, Ala., advertised, competed, and awarded a contract valued at about \$20,000 (EUR 18360.00) to Sud Moll.

The contract effort involves the collection, processing and transportation of all recyclable plastics in the Stabilization Force and Kosovo Force area of responsibilities.

Soldiers are asked to voluntarily recycle plastic but the garbage also will be sorted by hand by KBRs employees.

Currently, these employees in their sorting of the base's garbage for disposal remove tin cans.

James Lee, an environmental engineer for the Director of Public Works at Eagle Base, originally started the plastic recycling program.

His short-term predecessor, Joe Phelan, said in the briefing that all the credit goes to Lee.

Cost also is not a concern in recycling plastic.

"No matter the cost, to get these out of circulation is worth it," he said as he picked up a water bottle during the briefing.

Phelan said that the success of this program is due to Lee's commitment to the environment.

"Everybody should have the



Pretty soon sights like this will be a thing of the past. With the new recycling contract water bottles throughout MNB (North) will be sorted separately from other trash items, and removed for recycling.

thought process to recycle," Phelan commented.

Arndt noted that his personal goal in the first year of the program is to expand Bosnia and Herzegovina's recycling capabilities and seek other customers.

Capt. Keith Taylor, chief of the JCC on Eagle Base, said this recycling program might even improve further, encompassing such materials as cardboard and paper.

He said KBRs dispatches

full trucks from BiH to Kosovo. But on their return trip to Kosovo, they are empty. Taylor noted he would like to make an effort to fill those trucks with plastic products from Kosovo allowing all U.S. forces in the Balkans to join in the recycling efforts.

More than 418 tons of plastic bottles are accumulated annually from Task Force Eagle.

Each year the force also generates over 1,800 tons of garbage.



By Sgt. 1st Class Clinton Wood, 135th MPAD

Up, up and away

A Task Force Aviation Blackhawk crew chief watches a lift off near B Ramp recently.

Protect and serve

PSD team follows general's every move

by Spc. Jeremiah L. Wickenhauser
135th MPAD

While Brig. Gen. James R. "Ron" Mason is responsible for the safety of every soldier in his area of responsibility, the Personnel Security Detachment team is responsible for the safety of the MNB (N) Commander.

The PSD team consists of 1st Sgt. Eli Valenzuela, the team's personnel security officer, Sgt. Joshua Loos, Sgt. Timothy Merrell, Spc. Eric Gaiser, and Vesna Perićević, the interpreter.

Each team member has gone through the basic three-week Department of Defense Personnel Security Detachment training course as well as extensive driving, shooting and protection classes at the International Training Institute in Virginia.

The PSD team's mission is to protect the MNB (N) commander from assassination, kidnapping, injury and embarrassment. Every time the com-

mander leaves Eagle Base, the PSD team goes before him to do reconnaissance and to learn security information. Everything from where the bathrooms are, to the quickest escape route, the PSD team learns it all.

"Most of the work we do is behind the scenes so the mission goes smoothly when the general is in the area," said Merrell, who is the team's driver and helps out with security missions.

"If it's a two-hour mission for the general, it turns into an eight-hour mission for us," he said.

Valenzuela said his soldiers need to think five steps ahead. "If you can't think ahead or are singly focused, you can't do this job," he said.

"I have three other great agents who I rely on quite a bit. They do all the work, advanced route recon, and site surveys. I stay by the general and provide security."

Loos said their job gives the detachment a lot of freedom.



1st Sgt. Eli Valenzuela, of Gen. James R. "Ron" Mason's personnel security detail, stays no more than a couple of steps behind the commanding general to protect him wherever he travels.

"We frequently get to wear civilian clothes and leave the base," he said.

"Doing the advances, and getting outside the wire talking to people was my favorite part

of the job."

Gaiser stated that each mission has the potential of being dangerous. "The risks range from death to serious injury," he said.



The owner of a hotel near Tuzla Lake shows Sgts. Timothy Merrill, Joshua Loos, and interpreter Vesna Perićević surveillance equipment at the front desk during the PSD's recon to the area. The team conducts a reconnaissance of all areas prior to the commanding general's arrival.



Albert C. Zapanta, chairman of the Reserve Forces Policy Board, listened to Stabilization Force 13 and 14 soldiers' concerns during a Town Hall meeting, Sept. 11, at Peacekeepers Hall.

Chairman says now best time to be in reserve components

Story and photos by Sgt. 1st Class Clinton Wood
135th MPAD

Albert Zapanta, chairman of the Reserve Forces Policy Board, told several soldiers at a Sept. 11 Town Hall meeting at Peacekeepers Hall that Congress is working to instill one pay system for active duty Army and Army Reserve components.

"We're in the best environment we have ever been to make changes," he said.

"We're all in this together. We are in the opportune time to make changes."

Zapanta, a Vietnam War Special Forces veteran and retired Guardsman, was joined by four other board members, Maj. Gen. James Darden, Maj. Gen. Richard Wightman, Col. Richard

Roberts and Lt. Col. Sean Brunetti.

There are 24 members on the board, including the assistant secretaries of the Army, Navy, and Air Force responsible for reserve components. The board, which was created by a congressional act in 1952, reviews reserve-component programs in an annual report transmitted by the secretary of defense to the president and the congress under title 10.

Zapanta told the audience that reserve components are stronger because of their civilian occupation backgrounds.

Zapanta also fielded questions from the audience, including Temporary Duty concerns and the offering of military professional development schools during soldiers' lengthy deployments.



Lt. Col. Mark T. Stevens, 35th Infantry Division inspector general, was among the soldiers who asked Zapanta questions during the Reserve Forces Policy Board Town Hall meeting Sept. 11.

Night Ops

G-3 monitors MNB (North) 24 hours

Story and photo by Sgt. Guy D. Choate
343rd MPAD

As the sun hides its face under the horizon and the moon begins to rise high enough to stare down upon the soldiers of Eagle Base, most of us are sliding down under the warmth of our blankets.

However, not all soldiers on Eagle Base are. For some soldiers the sound of "Taps" at the end of the day doesn't mean it's time to close up shop, but rather open it.

The four-soldiers of the G-3 plans night operation team monitor all of Multinational Brigade (North) during the wee hours of the morning when most of Eagle Base is sleeping.

"We are the command group's night eyes and ears," said Maj. Kent McKenzie, G-3 Operations battle captain.

Should a situation arise in the MNB (N) area of responsibility, G-3 initiates a "wake-

"We are the command group's night eyes and ears."
Maj. Kent McKenzie

up" criteria that wakes up only those who need to be informed in order to handle the situation whatever it may be.

In order to be able to initiate the wake-up, G-3 has the most updated and accurate information on every soldier operating in the area.

To maintain such precise accountabil-

ity, the team is equipped with state of the art communication and satellite tracking devices.

"My favorite part of the job is being in here and seeing it all happen live," said Spc. Calvin Luethe.

"I like working at the brigade level because from where we are working, I get to see how all the units play off of each other," said Spc. Phillip Weaver.



Maj. Kent McKenzie (standing), G-3 Operations battle captain, gives his team a run down of the evening's activities. From left: Sgt. 1st Class Olive Palu, Spcs. Phillip Weaver and Calvin Luethe.

Seven-person G-1 team accomplishes mission

Story and photo by
Master Sgt. Keith Johnson
343rd MPAD

It should be obvious that soldiers did a good job during Stabilization Force 13, and judging by the numbers of awards, a lot of them did a great job.

The G-1 section of Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 35th Infantry Division (Mech.), processed more than 1,100 achievement awards during SFOR 13, said Staff Sgt. Craig Miller.

"Awards were our biggest item," said Miller.

In addition to the awards, the seven-person team handled NCOERs, OERs, Line of Duty investigations, emergency leave, Equal Opportunity and the Fighter Management Pass Program.

"During this rotation, we processed more than 190 emergency leaves, 200 LODs, 1,100 awards and 1,300 FMPP



Sgt. Paula Dickson, HHC, 35th ID, prepares one of the division's awards. More than 1,100 awards, 190 emergency leaves, 200 LODs and 1,300 FMPP requests were processed through the division's G-1 section during SFOR 13.

requests for soldiers," said Lt. Col. Donald Troth, the G-1 section OIC.

Troth said all of this was accomplished with only seven people.

The section normally has more than 30 soldiers but

were only authorized seven slots for this rotation, said Miller.

Still, Troth's main goal was accomplishing the mission, and he's confident this was achieved.

"Our single goal was to provide timely information and services to the task forces so they may be successful in their mission," said Troth.

Street name honors Asst. SECDEF Hall

OKLAHOMA CITY, Sept. 11, 2003 — State and local dignitaries in Oklahoma honored Assistant Secretary of Defense for Reserve Affairs Thomas F. Hall, renaming a street in his honor in his hometown of Barnsdall.

Barnsdall's former 8th Street is now Rear Admiral Tom Hall Avenue. Hall retired from the Navy as a two-star admiral after 34 years of service.

Among the dignitaries attending the day's events was Maj. Gen. Harry M. "Bud" Wyatt III, Oklahoma's adjutant general. Many people involved in the assistant secretary's life in Barnsdall — including teachers, principals and his basketball and baseball coach participated in events honoring Hall at Barnsdall High School. The day's events culminated with a ribbon-cutting ceremony at the renamed street and a reception hosted by the town's chamber of commerce.

JVB single point of contact for DVs

Story and photo by
Sgt. Guy D. Choate
343rd MPAD

Week after week the Talon publishes articles on the various distinguished visitors that pass through the gates at Eagle Base. However, the number of visitors far exceeds the number you can read about in the Talon. The articles you do read about the visitors make the visits seem so simple – a visitor arrived, participated, and then departed.

What the story doesn't tell the reader is what goes on behind the scenes to make that visitor's stay at Eagle Base a pleasant one.

The Task Force Eagle Joint Visitors Bureau is the single point of contact for all distinguished visitors – those military or civilian visitors with the equivalent rank of brigadier general or above – coming into the Multinational Brigade (North) area of responsibility.

The eight-member, multinational team, now seven-member after the Danish contingent's departure, is responsible for making all the preparations required by the distinguished visitors. There are five U.S. military members, one from Moldova, and one from Poland.

"We take care of all of their itineraries. We arrange office calls, whatever briefings they want, we get them on the patrols and tours, and we arrange transportation, meals, and quarters," said Lt. Col. Donald Conover, chief, Joint Visitors Bureau.

There are three general categories for which distinguished visitors usually come to Eagle Base, said Conover. One category is made up of people who have been here in



"It's hard trying to accommodate all the different needs of the (DVs) group. A lot of phone calls and e-mail coordination has to be done – mostly back to the states and with the time difference, that can be pretty hard," said Capt. Jason Buckhold, Joint Visitors Bureau project officer.

the past, and now want to come back to see what's happened since their departure and what changes have been made.

The second category is of those who have never been here and are gathering information about why there is a military presence here and what the military is doing.

"JVB sets the initial tone and perception of Task Force Eagle with the visitors."

Lt. Col. Donald Conover

The last category is made up of visitors who come in for significant events.

Stabilization Force 13 has hosted more than 225 distinguished visitors since arriving in March.

With big events, such as the official opening of the Potocari Memorial and the transfer of authority from SFOR 13 to SFOR 14, the JVB is planning another 80 to 100 visitors before they are scheduled to go home at the end of September.

"JVB sets the initial tone and perception of Task Force Eagle with the visitors. If we do a bad job, they get a bad impression. If we do a good job, they get a good impression," said Conover.

"We're sort of in the tourism industry, but with a military twist," he said.

"Getting the opportunity to

meet and interact with the visitors is very interesting," said the JVB's only enlisted member, Sgt. 1st Class Rodney Simpson.

"It was interesting to work with the multinationals on a daily basis. Working with them and comparing cultures has helped me to develop some good friendships."



Lt. Col. Donald Conover, chief, Joint Visitors Bureau, and Sgt. 1st Class Rodney Simpson, Joint Visitors Bureau noncommissioned officer-in-charge, prepare for upcoming DVs.

In our sights



Photos by Sgt. 1st Class Clinton Wood, 135th MPAD

The sun sets on a Blackhawk Medevac helicopter, one of several lined up near the B Ramp.



Justin Klakoski attempts to stop the ball from going out of bounds in the SFOR 13 vs. SFOR 14 basketball game Monday. SFOR 13 won 33-26.



Chaplain Maj. James Messer gave a brief message during the 9-11 Memorial Service at Eagle Base Chapel



Sgt. Steven Furrow danced with Melissa, one of the dancers of the Meyra trio, during a MWR show at Triggers Monday.